



The Heart As He Hears It

A.M. Arthur

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Love can slip through the smallest crack in the door.

Perspectives, Book 3

While most of his friends have moved on to “real” careers, Jon Buchanan is content skating through life as a part-time waiter and gay porn star. Firmly single thanks to a previous relationship disaster, he focuses his spare time on Henry, a dear friend dying of cancer. And with Henry’s happiness paramount, Jon is on a mission to help Henry meet his recently discovered grandson.

Isaac Gregory hasn’t set foot outside for the past year. He has everything he needs delivered, and his remaining family knows better than to visit. When a complete stranger shows up claiming to be his grandfather—with a distractingly handsome younger man in tow—his carefully structured routines are shaken.

Despite his instant attraction, Jon senses Isaac is too fragile for a relationship. Yet tentative friendship grows into genuine companionship. And when Henry’s health begins to fail, they realize Fate brought them together for a reason.

Note: This book was previously published by Samhain Publishing. No significant changes have been made. Please read with tissues handy.

The Heart As He Hears It Details

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Author : A.M. Arthur

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From Reader Review The Heart As He Hears It for online ebook

? Todd says

I liked this story quite a bit and, unlike book 1, the fuckery was kept to a minimum, with only a bit of *truly* uncharacteristically bad behavior by Jon toward the end of the book.

However, for one of the MC's to be a porn star, the story was surprisingly light on the sex. It was there in spots, but not too in your face, which was fine.

The story ends with a bit of insane stalker cray-cray, which felt a slightly over the top, but it didn't bother me too awfully so.

Overall, I'd rate this one around 3.75 stars.

Susan says

2.5 stars

This book just got on my nerves. I was happy I quit with the audio and started reading, because I was not too thrilled with the narrator. He used an old man's voice for Isaac, who was 22. And to listen to that for 11 hours...

I'm always curious to see how authors handle one of the MCs being in the porn industry. I was not too happy how things were handled in this one.

I was glad to see that Jon never did another scene once he started dating Isaac, but I felt the whole importance of Jon being in porn was totally brushed over here.

When Jon told Isaac he was in porn, all Jon thought was how he hoped Isaac wasn't a judgmental asshole about it.

Could it be that it's not about judging you for being in porn, but that fact that he might have a problem with you having sex with other people?? Oh, and Isaac was totally fine with it, which struck me as very unrealistic. They were very in love by that point and I cannot believe Isaac just shrugged and was okay with it.

The rest of the story showed potential, but I felt things were over explained or just too detailed. It took some of the emotion out of the story.

Christy says

I was so excited to begin 'The Heart As He Hears It', the third book in A.M. Arthur's 'Perspectives' series. I loved the first two books and having met Jon previously I really wanted to know his story. Even more I wanted him to find the love his best friend Gabe found with Tristan, and to find someone who loved him for exactly who he was.

"Existence wasn't enough anymore. Isaac stared at the stumbling kitten, startled by the realization that his carefully structured life wasn't saving him. It was confining him. Protecting him from harm, yes, but also restraining him from people like Henry and Jon. Two people he did want to get to know better. He wanted to live. And he could start by rescuing a tiny kitten."

Jon was kicked out of his parents' home at eighteen for being gay. Through his oldest sister and a friend of a friend, he met Henry and lived on his couch for years. Henry helped him get his feet under him and was there when Jon's mentally abusive relationship led him to anorexia. Henry is the father Jon never had and now he's dying of cancer. So when Henry tells him he just found out he had a son who was murdered but left a wife and child, Jon instantly agrees to take Henry to meet the family he never knew. That's how he meets Isaac, Henry's grandson, who is partially deaf and suffers from severe agoraphobia.

Isaac had a miserable childhood due to his father's alcoholism, extreme temper, and severe physical abuse. In fact, that's how Isaac ended up partially deaf after his father slammed him into a wall when he was a child. After his father was murdered, his mother couldn't handle her depression and ended up killing herself, leaving Isaac to grow up with his grandparents. He loved his grandparents but now they're both gone, too, and he's alone. He has extended family on his mom's side but Isaac knows that alone is how you stay safe, and staying in the house is how you remain alive.

"Jon's hand in his made his body hum with joy as much as it made him want to cry. Isaac had made a connection. An actual, real connection with another human being unlike anything he'd had with his family. This ran deeper, past his fear and his walls and into his soul. This was something he could trust."

It may have been Bear, the kitten, that started Isaac and Jon's friendship, but it's the similarities in what they both struggle with that deepens the friendship and allows them both to begin to heal. Slowly. Very slowly. Their friendship slowly becomes more with both of them inching their way into intimacy of any kind. Unfortunately, someone in Jon's life doesn't want to let him go, and it's going to take both of them, and their newfound love, to survive.

An excellent finale to a mind-blowing series. I can't thank the author enough for the beauty of her words.

NOTE: This book was provided by the publisher for the purpose of a review on Rainbow Book Reviews

Karen says

What goods a buddy read without the angst...

This was my first buddy read over on GR with the awesome Christelle. Thanks for the giggles and the occasional ragefest ;)

'The Heart as He Hears It' was the third and probably the final book in this series since Ms. Arthur tends to write her series in sets of 3. Hopefully there will a spin-off series as we have seen happen previously since she left us with more than a couple of characters that we need more information on. There was Jake, who seems to keep showing up with mysterious and really poorly explained injuries, Dane who is just a big ole' sexy enigma, Dell who is Chet's nephew and fell off the rehab wagon for reason's known to Rick but which Rick refuses to clarify and yeah, let's not forget Rick, but I'll get to him later and there's also the sexy and seemingly sweet nurse, Vinson who was hired to care for Henry. So yeah, lots of new characters begging for their own story.

'The Heart as He Hears It' is Jon's story. Jon and ultimately Isaac, the grandson of Jon's dearest friend Henry, whom as we know from book #2 is dying. In his efforts to get his affairs in order Henry discovers he had a son named Jerome. While Jerome is no longer alive he is survived by a son. A son who is damaged both physically (he has a severe hearing loss) and emotionally (things in his past have left him both mistrustful and basically terrified of the outside world resulting in Isaac becoming agoraphobic).

When Isaac first meets Henry and Jon it takes all his inner strength to open his front door and let his aunt bring these strangers into his home. While he is leery of Henry who bares a vague resemblance to his abusive deceased father, he is immediately drawn to Jon. Jon who is magazine model beautiful and whose voice Isaac wants desperately to be able to hear better because it soothes him.

While the attraction between these two men is instant the love is not and this I really liked. Their relationship built through a series of events that draw them together and Jon realizes immediately that Isaac is not ready by any stretch of the imagination to dive into a relationship so he offers Isaac what he feels he can handle...a friendship. One that Isaac can determine the pace of. It's hard but for Jon it's worth the effort and he's willing to do what it takes to keep them in each others lives.

I loved how the relationship between these two progressed and there were some very giggle worthy moments...sex talks were epic...I might have digressed to being a 12 year old once or twice. In spite of his fear of the world Isaac is a young man with an insatiable thirst for knowledge, he is full of questions and he asked them in the most direct manner.

It may have been Jon & Henry that got Isaac to open the door and let the world begin to slip in a bit at a time but it was a sweet little grey kitten that helped him to be brave enough to take that first step back outside of his backdoor and it was such a wonderful moment. Once he did this he became determined to stop existing and begin living again. It wasn't always easy and there were setbacks but I loved watching Isaac as he struggled with his fears, watching Jon give him friendship, support and ultimately seeing them admit their love for each other and yeah, there were definitely some 'fan yourself' moments...there was the time in the shower and of course the bed, hours spent kissing on the couch...there is much to be said for kissing.

This all sounds pretty good right? It was. This part of the story easily gets a solid 4 maybe even 4.5 stars from me...so, what happened? where did it go wrong? Why only 3.5 stars? Well as is often the case with this author I think she got out her 'angst & sh!t went wrong' shopping list and just kept adding. Rick is the perfect example did we really need him in the story? From my perspective no. But yet there he was.

(view spoiler)

There was more so much more that it really did start to feel like a shopping list of 'angst & sh!t that went wrong' that the author was using or maybe it was just her way of digging Rick out of the corner that she'd put him in so that we'd like him enough to want his story. If that was the case than it worked because I went from

wanting him to be able to sing soprano to relocating certain parts of his anatomy to thinking 'well maybe, he's changed tell me a bit more about him and I'll consider it' but he was still a douche when he was with Jon and sorry, not going to believe differently and Chet's gold halo has a big tarnish spot on it for making Jon feel like he believed Rick over him...oops, I guess you now know what one of those ragefest that Christelle got pertained to ;)

So at the end of all this we know 2 things for sure. #1 Once again this is a case of less would have been more as in more stars from me, if there had been less angst and drama towards the end and #2 sometimes I suck at writing short reviews...oops, 3 things...#3 Christelle is an awesomely fun person to do a buddy read with. Thanks my friend.

Sadly this is only 3 stars rounded down from 3.5 because you guessed it still no 1/2 stars here on GR and because too much is too much and the angst at the end of this book ended up being too much.

Vanessa theJeepDiva says

Jon and Isaac balance each other out so well. They both have suffered through something that has completely skewed their view on relationships with others, even attempting to allow new relationships to develop. Isaac has locked himself in his home. It is the only place he feels safe. Jon has turned to porn as a career. The Mean Green Boys studio is the only place where he feels like he can find safe, no strings sex. These two men meeting and developing a friendship is an amazing thing. The relationship that turns into a kind loving relationship makes for a great read. I loved this book!

Your heart is going to break for both Jon and Isaac. Jon is losing his best friend and father figure Henry to cancer. Henry has been there for Jon at his lowest times. Henry has helped Jon put himself back together more than once. Jon does not see being by Henry's side as any type of hardship. He knows that the hardship will come with his far too soon death. When Henry asks Jon to help him connect with his grandson Jon knows there is only one answer, of course.

For the past year Isaac's remaining family have kept their distance and allowed him his solitude. The day his great aunt shows up on his doorstep with two strangers is beyond shocking to the young man. His home has become his sanctuary, his only safe place. That one step of opening the door for the strangers his great aunt came by with will be the first of many new things for Isaac. It's the miracle that Isaac has been waiting for. It's the beginning of two lives being lived when both believed there was no hope.

The first book in the Perspectives series sparked my addiction to A.M. Arthur books. I've read many since and look forward to many more. The Heart as He Hears it easily works as a stand-alone. The couples from the previous books have a mention and one couple has a small appearance but nothing in Jon's life happened in the previous two books that would require a reader to have to read those books. I do highly recommend them as they are excellent reads.

Eleeze says

4.5*

Loved this one, book 2 is still my favorite but this one is a close second.

My heart ached for Isaac, for Jon and Henry too. I'm so happy with the snippets we got from Gabe and Tristan, nothing of Shane and Noel though, I hope they're still enjoying their HEA.

Loved the families-of-choice sentiment, as well as the power of love breaking walls that seem impossible to overcome.-

MishyJo says

Story 4+ stars. Narration took a while to get used to but not bad, 3.5 stars. I realized I have over a dozen audio books on my Audible account I haven't listened to, so here goes. I enjoyed this book a lot. There is so much adversity facing all of the characters in this story but it wasn't melodramatic or depressing. Despite everything, the story had a hopeful tone throughout and I was so proud of these guys and how they faced their demons. It was a bit unbelievable that Isaac could get as far as he did with only Jon's encouragement. IRL he probably would have needed, and still needs, years of counseling. But this is fiction, so it worked. I accidentally started working through this series with book 3, but fortunately, it doesn't seem to matter that I went out of order.

Denise H. says

*** Wonderful A.M. Arthur M/M story !!

Awesome series !! ***

Complex characters, a psycho, a shut-in, a dying friend, finding a true friend and savior, healing, caring, first time sex, and a beautifully written story that will make you happy. Much is happening with Jon,

waiter/porn star, a handsome man who has stayed away from relationships.

His friend is dying and wants to connect with a newly discovered grandson. Jon helps. When Henry and Isaac meet, Jon is there and has an instant reaction to Isaac.

Isaac is an agoraphobic, timid, and shy, partially deaf,

plus terrified of strangers. We find out why later.

I liked this cast of people, so genuine, honest, accepting and understanding. I know Rick hurt Jon with verbal abuse when they were together, but his presence in the tale seemed relevant.

Throughout the blooming friendship, Isaac opens up more and more.

The addition of the kitten was adorable and helped the men bond.

"BEAR" she's so cute !

Their first time "sexcapades" are well done, erotic, and wonderfully written.

The psycho brings violence and craziness. The rescue is great.

This tale is more hopeful than sad. Good coming from bad.

I'm highly recommending this story.

It can stand alone, but I've read them all, so I knew all the side characters, which made it more fulfilling. Terrific epilogue !

ENJOY !!!

Line says

[What the effing fudge is it with these authors?! (This rant will probably be posted on the pages for the other books, this rant also mentions.)

I have nothing against personal growth. I have nothing against being the bigger person. I have nothing against forgiveness, BUT forgiving emotional abuse just 'because', gi

Tanja says

Das ursprüngliche Zuhause dieser Rezension ist der WortWelten-Blog:
<http://wort-welten.blogspot.de/>

Zusammenfassung:

Seit dem Tod seiner Großmutter hat Isaac Gregory das einstige Haus seiner Großeltern nicht mehr wirklich verlassen. Nur dort fühlt er sich sicher. Als jedoch eines Tages ein Mann vor seiner Tür steht, der behauptet, der ihm bisher nicht bekannte Vater von Isaacs eigenem gewalttätigem Vater zu sein, und der zudem auch noch einen außerordentlich gut aussehenden jungen Mann bei sich hat, stellt das Isaacs bisher wunderbar strukturiertes Leben mehr als nur ein bisschen auf den Kopf.

Denn nicht nur, dass Henry, sein neuer Großvater totkrank ist. Nein, auch sind da ganz unbekannte Gefühle, die Isaac plötzlich für Jon, Henrys besten Freund zu empfinden beginnt. Und das, wo Isaac doch bei Beziehungen alles andere als bewandert ist und zudem ein Trauma mit sich herumschleppt, das kaum mit ihm in sein Haus passt. Und auch Jon hat weit mehr Geheimnisse, als Isaac erwarten würde - allen voran sein Doppelleben als Bomer Black, einem gefeierten Pornostar ...

Fazit:

Nach The Truth As He Knows It und The World As He Sees It, haben wir hier nun also den dritten Teil der Perspectives-Reihe. Wie bei den beiden voran gegangenen Büchern hatte auch dieses Werk wieder Teile, die mir wahnsinnig gut gefallen haben. Aber eben auch fast mehr Aspekte, die einfach nicht meine Sache waren, die mich total genervt haben oder die ich gar unrealistisch oder bizarr fand. Leider. Alles in allem bewerte ich dann hier also ein Buch, das mir dann doch weniger gefallen als gut gefallen hat.

?? Michaelle ♡?? says

4.2 Stars

I've been on an angsty, self-reflective and/or mentally ill character book streak and it's a little bit exhausting.

That said, this was really good. I think the agoraphobia, anxiety and eating disorder were handled well and accurately - and with respect. Also, still loving that porn is treated in a mostly positive light for their studio; that Chet considers it a stepping stone for guys to get where they want to professionally and personally, and that he's a pretty decent boss.

I'm not sure if AMA has more in store to further this series but I sure as hell hope so! I need to know what the hell is up with Jake, what happened to Rick's charmed life, if Dane & Chet are a couple and why Chet's nephew ODed. So, I'm crossing my fingers for at least 2-3 more additional books!

Jeff says

Not the best writing, but a cute story for my first romance novel. I am concerned about the abundant use of the term "babe," do people really still call each other that?

Aerin says

~3.75 stars~

This is book #3 in this series and it can be read as a standalone, although I recommend reading the previous books as well since some of the characters are mentioned a few times, especially the ones from book #2.

I was excited to read this book and it was almost 5 stars from the beginning because I loved most of it. Jon is a porn star (Gabe's best friend if you read book #2) who enjoys his job thoroughly because what's not to like? Safe sex in a nice environment, no judgement from the other partners and getting paid to have fun! The only thing missing is someone to fall in love with and thank god for that, because Jon definitely isn't looking for a boyfriend. You'd think a porn star is someone completely happy and confident in their body, with a lot of confidence and self esteem. That's not the case with Jon.... Jon has serious body issues and has been battling anorexia for some time now. An emotionally abusive ex-boyfriend left Jon with no confidence and no love for his body, never really happy with how he looks.

Isaac is the new-found nephew of Henry, Jon's father figure and person he would do anything for. Isaac has been an agoraphobic for the past year, and an unhappy childhood at the hands of an aggressive drunk/druggie father left him with limited hearing and plenty of issues; Isaac is basically afraid of his own shadow and he isolated himself from the rest of his family. When Jon and his dying grandfather show up on his doorstep, Isaac takes a huge effort to get to know them. His effort pays off because he gains a great friend and a loving grandfather; nothing heals a heart better than love (well maybe some kitten cuddles do make everything that much better).

Jon and Isaac are instantly taken with each other and there's nothing more endearing than an experienced porn star and an innocent Isaac helping each other become stronger and figuring their way to a beautiful relationship. I really liked (and though was very appropriate) how slow their relationship progressed considering Isaac's serious and crippling issues. But there's strength and perseverance within them both and it was beautiful to see how they made each other better.

I can't say much without giving away the entire plot, but towards the end of the book there's this totally

cliche moment when thing come to a blow and it sort of disappointed me. I didn't need the extra drama because this book was full of feels and emotions, it truly was beautiful until that point. (it's what brought my rating down from 4.5 stars to 3.75)

Overall this was pretty great, a beautiful and emotional book full of feelz. My final rating is 3.75 stars.

Annie ~ Queer Books Unbound says

Reviewed for From Top to Bottom Reviews.

I received an ARC of this book from Samhain Publishing via Netgalley in return of an honest review

This was the first book I read by this author.

The Heart As He Hears It is part of a series but you can easily read it as stand-alone. Characters of the previous books are mentioned in this one but I had no problems following this story because it's centered around two different characters. But after reading this one I definitely want to read the first two books too.

The Heart As He Hears It is about Jon, a porn star with serious body-issues and self-perception issues, and Isaac, an agoraphobic young man who still struggles with things that happened in his childhood. They are both fractured souls who are trying to cope with what happened to them, both in a different yet similar way.

Jon started his porn career to win back a bit of confidence and Isaac started an online comic to handle his fear of not being able to control a situation. He feels safest in his house and hasn't left it in over a year.

They meet because Henry, Isaacs grandfather, who at the beginning of the story didn't know he had a son (and a grandson) comes looking for Isaac.

Henry suffers from a terminal illness and wants to spent his remaining time getting to know his grandson. Jon is there to accompany Henry and immediately feels a connection with Isaac.

I really liked the slow-burn development of the relationship between Isaac and Jon. They've both been hurt before and insta-love would have felt out of character. They get to know each other and slowly a friendship forms which turns then into more.

I had a bit of the problem with the realism of how Isaacs agoraphobia was portrayed. This book is fluffy and romantic but it seemed illogical for Isaac to get better so fast and without the help of a therapist.

Other than that I quite liked the story and the characters and of course Bear. She's a cutie!

I have no experience with an eating disorder but for me it felt like A.M. Arthur handled that aspect of the story really well and it seemed realistic.

The writing in this story flows easily and it didn't take long for me to get into the story.

I can't say a lot without giving too much away, but there's a quite a bit of drama toward the end of the book which seemed over the top. It was completely unexpected and threw me a bit out of the story.

Overall though I really enjoyed it and would recommend it especially to someone who's looking for something romantic and fluffy and who can oversee a few little flaws in the realism of the storyline.

Erica Chilson says

I received a copy of this title to read and review for Wicked Reads

5 Stars.

A.M. Arthur's writing style is always filled with a slow-burn romance between fully fleshed-out, developed characters, mixed with the reality of tragedy and disabilities. *The Heart as He Hears It* is no different.

The 3rd book in the Perspectives series is a great addition, following in the footsteps of its predecessors. The past narrators are shown, allowing the readers to stay connected, and no doubt we've met the narrators for future books.

Jon is a complex character, who is going through a painful time as he watches his best friend, Henry, waste away from cancer. The ties that bind the series together, Jon is a porn actor battling emotional demons- an abusive, past relationship which left his confidence in the negatives, as well as helped exacerbate his anorexia. Shifting his focus onto Henry, he'd do anything to make his final days happy ones.

In walks Henry's long-lost grandson, Isaac, a young man fighting his own demons. Demons in which left him deaf in one ear, and partially deaf in the other. Agoraphobic, socially inept, innocent in the ways of the world, home-schooled and highly intelligent, the comic book creator is Jon's perfect balance.

Without writing the entire plot out, *The Heart as He Hears It* runs the gamut of emotions. I laughed, smiled, and cried with the characters who felt so very real for me. No fear on insta-love, insta-lust, or even an over-abundance of between-the-sheets action. The novel is most certainly story-driven, but there is a true sense of intimacy between Jon and Isaac.

Sad yet endearing, throw a cuddly kitten in the mix and you've got yourself a comfort read.

Recommended to MM Contemporary Romance fans, with a depth of the darker sides of reality mixed with the warm and fuzzy. However, those who are looking for a romp need to understand while the book is highly sensual, it's not a smexy fest.

I look forward to the next in the series. Actually, I wished I had it right now. I'd gobble it right up.
